

## Sue's Reflections on the Church Project, 18/10/2023

Firstly I'd like to say why I'm an interested party.

I don't live in Hartshill but I worship at Holy Trinity, Hartshill for the following reasons:

- My parents worshipped and socialised here since 1964 and so I have an emotional attachment to the Church
- I have made friends at Church
- It is a beautiful building in beautiful grounds
- I want to maintain a Mothers' Union branch at Hartshill

I want the Church project to ensure the future of the Church, not just for the people within the parish but for the many outside the parish who consider it to be their Church.

I think we might all have different visions of what we would like to see done to the Church building and so I thought I would state what mine is.

### Short term

I am concerned that people are put off attending by the state of the Church interior and the comfort of the Church. I therefore see the following as urgent

- Decorate the interior
- Fix the heating system sufficient to heat the Church to a comfortable temperature for services in the colder weather (Comfortable when wearing outdoor clothing)
- If the Church is too cold for a service, hold it in the hall

### Long term

My long term goals would be

- Fix the windows
- Install "green", efficient heating
- Do any necessary improvements to flooring, lighting, sound system, visual system etc.
- Add seat cushions to pews for comfort
- Add display areas such as Mothers' Union display board (minor)

Remove dependency on the Community Centre by adding

- Kitchen area for making drinks etc.
- Toilet
- Meeting area

### Community Use

I've yet to be convinced of the demand for use of the Church by the Community. There is already a Community Centre which is much more community space than anywhere else I know of.

If there was to be community use, somebody would have to manage it!

I still have a concern about car parking.

I worry that it is “the thin end of the wedge” if we lose parts of the Church.

## Funding

There are 2 aspects to funding.

### Funding for Alterations

I know that there is some money available and various grants can be applied for but I believe an appeal would have to be set up when the plan is known. I think somebody would need to take charge of the appeal (definitely not me and I’m not doing a bungee jump)!

### Running costs for heating etc.

The size of the congregation may well increase if the Church environment is more appealing, thus attracting more income.

It is also likely to attract more weddings etc.

Incidentally, we could hold more concerts in the Church as it is now. I saw Bulkington Silver Band at Attleborough recently and they were touting for venues.

## Reflections on Jeff’s presentation

The window solution sounds a good compromise.

I don’t think we should think about it for 2 years!

I agree that consultants are a waste of money. My only consultant is Google.

I’m not keen on the tent idea in our Church if it means not seeing the windows. I would rather have services in the hall when necessary in the short term.

## Observation on Attendance (and income)

I don’t think we can stem the tide of non attendance at Church but I think we have to be aware that there are now a lot of Churches fishing from a small pool of worshippers. Hartshill already has quite a large proportion of the congregation coming from outside the parish and so it is conceivable that there could be more. In my travels with MU to other Churches in the Deanery, I have observed that churches such as Attleborough and Exhall seem to have larger congregations and my unsubstantiated conclusion is that they attract people from outside the parish because they are nice physical environments. (The people are not any nicer than us.)

I hope that’s not too rambling but I wanted to put my stake in the ground.

I also think we need to set our aims and objectives down in writing.